

To the Honorable the General Assembly of the State  
of North Carolina -

The petition and memorial of Elizabeth Bentley  
of the County of Wilkes respectfully represents to your  
Honorable body - That about thirty three years ago, she  
intermarried with one James Bentley, by whom she has  
had eleven children - That a few years after their inter-  
marriage she became satisfied that her said husband  
was unfaithful to her bed, but that the great desire which  
she felt to live in peace and harmony, and to discharge  
on her part all the duties of a faithful and constant wife  
induced her to pass over in silence the many acts of  
impropriety and inconstancy which she knew her said  
husband to be guilty of - That notwithstanding the ill  
treatment which she so repeatedly received at his hands,  
she endeavored, time after time by all the means in her  
power to dissuade her said husband from pursuing the  
ruinous course of conduct which he had adopted, and  
would at any time have freely forgiven past offenses,  
upon reasonable assurance of reformation and satisfa-  
ctory evidence of his determination to return to his duty  
as the partner of her bosom - Her entreaties and per-  
suasions however proved utterly unavailing, and her  
said husband continued his neckless course until about  
three years ago he suddenly abandoned your petitioner  
and eloped with another woman, with whom your  
petitioner has been informed he has lived ever since.  
Your petitioner further represents that her said husband  
left her entirely destitute of the means of support, with  
several children who were unable to provide a subsis-  
tence for themselves - That by her industry she has pro-  
vided a small amount of property which by the law of  
the State she is informed is liable to be levied upon to